

Remarks & Arguments

In the Office Action, the Examiner noted that Claims 1-49 are pending in the application, and that Claims 1-49 are rejected. By this amendment, Claims 1, 12, 21, 37, 40, 43, 46 and 48 have been amended. The amendments to the claims, and drawings do not add new matter to the application. The Examiner's rejections are traversed below.

Objection to Drawings

Figure 1 has been amended to render the objection moot.

Rejections Under 35 USC 102 and 103

Independents Claims 1, 12, 21, 37, 40, 43, 46 and 48 stand rejected under 102(a) or 103(a) in light of Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAIP) or AAIP in combination with Jin et al (US Patent No. 6,392,286) and/or Farnsworth et al. (US Patent No. 6,549,821). Applicant respectfully asserts that the independent Claims 1, 12, 21, 37, 40, 43, 46 and 48 are patentable over the relied upon prior art. The prior art does not teach or suggest that die-strips are processed on an in-line basis.

Furthermore, Claims 1, 12, 21, 37, 40, 43, 46 and 48 have been amended to include the limitation that die-strips and die-strip components are transported by an automatic transfer device. Claims 1, 12, 21, 37, 40, 43, 46 and 48 have also been amended to include the limitation

Appl. No. 10/085,757
Amdt. Dated May 5, 2004
Reply to Office Action of February 5, 2004

that a next one of the die-strips and/or die-strip components do not wait for a previous die-strip and/or die-strip component to finish an entire processing cycle before entering the pipeline. The additional limitations are not taught or suggested by the relied upon prior art.

Claims 2-11, 13-30, 22-36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45, 47 and 49 are dependent upon independent Claims 1, 12, 21, 37, 40, 43, 46 and 48, respectively, and incorporate all the limitation of the independent claims. Thus, dependent Claims 2-11, 13-30, 22-36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45, 47 and 49 are also patentable for all the above reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1-49 is therefore respectfully requested.

Conclusion

For all the reasons advanced above, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance and that action is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees, which may be required for this amendment, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account 23-0085. In the event that an extension of time is required, or may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to

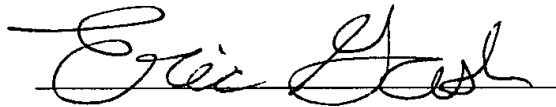
Appl. No. 10/085,757
Amdt. Dated May 5, 2004
Reply to Office Action of February 5, 2004

charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time
to Deposit Account 23-0085.

Respectfully submitted,

WAGNER, MURABITO & HAO, LLP

Dated: May 5, 2004

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric J. Gash", written over a horizontal line.

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